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MEMORIAM

'A MAN OF INTEGRITY'

PNC Galbraith, who passed away March 4, remembered as a gentleman and true servant to veterans.

By Steve B. Brooks

PNC William E. Galbraith passed away March 4 at age 86. View an interview with him at legion.org *American Legion photo*

Early on, William E. Galbraith's interest in The American Legion didn't include much more than a place to play pinochle. That changed in 1950 when his wife, Gwen, became president of American Legion Auxiliary Unit 159 in Beemer, Neb.; William was a member of Post 159.

Gwen attended Nebraska's Auxiliary convention and, upon returning home, told Galbraith that if he'd get more involved in the Legion, he'd find it to be a very important organization doing very important things. And the rest, as they say, is history.

Galbraith took his wife's advice and became post commander in 1953. A decade later, Galbraith began a quick ascension, serving as Department of Nebraska commander from 1962-1963, Nebraska's National Executive Committeeman from 1964-1965, a national vice commander from 1965-1966 and national commander from 1967-1968. He passed away March 4 at age 86.

"He was a dedicated Legionnaire who always put the Legion up front and above everything else," said Past National Commander Michael J. Kogutek, who knew Galbraith for more than five decades. "He was truly interested in The American Legion and in our veterans.

"And on a personal note, he was a man of integrity. He always spoke from the heart and was very sincere. I'm going to miss him, and I know the organization is going to miss him."

Past National Commander Clarence Bacon knew Galbraith since the early 1960s. After serving as commander, Galbraith and his wife would often visit their daughter in Maryland, Bacon's home state. The two, along with their wives, would have dinner. Galbraith also came to Maryland immediately after his tenure as national commander to deliver Veterans Day speeches to Legion posts and a school.

"On a personal level, he was a real gentleman," Bacon said. "He was always very concerned and caring toward veterans, and he was willing to do all kinds of jobs to help them at both the state and national level."

Galbraith tried to enter the military at 17, but his father wouldn't sign the necessary paperwork. He joined when he turned 18 and served as a Navy Armed Guard radar man. While stationed mostly in the United States, he did make one trip across the Atlantic to La Havre, France, aboard a merchant ship that had been converted to a troop carrier.

After his service, Galbraith attended the University of Nebraska on the GI Bill, graduating in just three years

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NATIONAL COMMANDER

Wong, Obama talk jobs in D.C.

American Legion National Commander Fang Wong and President Barack Obama met in the Oval Office of the White House Feb. 28 to discuss veterans unemployment and a variety of issues pertinent to veterans and their families.

Following the Feb. 28 meeting, which included American Legion National Adjutant Daniel S. Wheeler, the national commander said career opportunities for veterans is atop the president's priority list. The pair also discussed the Department of Veterans Affairs budget, and how defense cuts will affect military retirement pay and medical benefits.

"He seems to be very on top of the employment issue and very concerned about it," Wong said. "We expressed satisfaction with our memoranda of understanding signing today with the Department of Agriculture, and expressed hope that other federal agencies would follow suit and join in the effort to hire veterans."

Wong said he shared with Obama the concerns of servicemembers he had spoken with during a 2011 visit to Afghanistan: TRICARE co-pay increases, changes to the military retirement system and reducing the Department of Defense budget.

"The president said that in this economy, some cuts are unavoidable," Wong said. "But he said the military retirement plan will stay as it is right now. There is a commission looking at it now, and the earliest any decision would be made would be in two years. If a change is needed, he said he would consult with the VSOs to get their input.

"I shared with him that The American Legion has strongly opposed increases in TRICARE co-pays, as well as increases in pharmaceutical co-pays, for years. We discussed the

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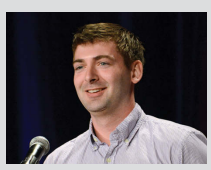

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PLANNER

MARCH

15-17 American Legion Birthday

APRIL

Children & Youth Month

1 Eagle Scout of the Year applications due to National Headquarters

1-7 American Legion Child Welfare Foundation Week

11 95-percent membership target date

13-15 75th Annual High School Oratorical Contest, Indianapolis

15 American Legion Legacy Scholarship applications due to National Headquarters

MAY

1 Child Welfare Foundation grant applications available

5-6 SAL Spring NEC Meetings, Indianapolis

6 Child Welfare Foundation board of directors meeting, Indianapolis

7-10 Spring NEC Meetings, Indianapolis

9 100-percent membership target date

15 Peace Officers Memorial Day

19 Armed Forces Day

28 Memorial Day

31 End of Child Welfare Foundation award year

COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

Youth program alums invited to join online

The American Legion's online community is growing at an impressive clip, and that makes a lot of sense. If ever there were an organization well-suited for today's world of high-speed electronic communication and mobilization, it is The American Legion. With nearly 2.5 million members and some 14,000 posts worldwide, our network is vast, sprawling and energetic. Add to that the Sons of The American Legion, the American Legion Auxiliary, Legion Riders, friends and supporters, and you can easily identify more than 4 million people whose lives regularly involve some aspect of the Legion – whether they are interested in a Samsung Scholarship, learning about this year's Legacy Run, registering online to attend a Hiring Our Heroes job fair or sharing a YouTube video with Facebook friends.

Fang A. Wong
National Commander

At the post, district, department and national levels, the Legion has worked hard to establish a thriving network of comrades that is growing ever more connected online through websites, blogs, social and other electronic media. It is difficult to put a number on this audience, but we know that more than 500,000 people per month visit some place in our online community. There, they can read about our activities, buy Legion merchandise, join or renew, manage their membership, watch videos and communicate with one another.

One of our new developments in this arena is a Facebook page designed to unite those who have participated in, or helped with, Legion youth programs. The American Legion Youth Programs Alumni Association promotes networking among those involved or interested in Boys State, Boys Nation, Scouting, oratorical competitions, Junior Shooting Sports, American Legion Baseball, scholarships and other youth activities. These programs come in many shapes, sizes and forms, and we know that tens of thousands of Americans attribute some part of their success to a Legion youth program. As a School Award Medal recipient, I can honestly say that this statement applies to me.

The dues-free association has a dedicated place on the Legion website – **www.legion.org/youthalumni** – where members can sign up for an e-newsletter to stay up to date about programs, submit personal stories and photos, learn about opportunities to volunteer, or donate. The "Ask an Alum" feature is for anyone interested in starting, operating or participating in a Legion youth program.

The success of this association, like the best of today's electronic media, depends on audience interaction. Those who regularly use Facebook, or comment on articles posted at **www.legion.org** or the Burn Pit blog, understand that stories are often just starting points for conversations among members. Out of these conversations come great ideas, involvement and camaraderie, and that's the power of interactive media.

That is also why – as we observe April as Children & Youth Month – I am asking everyone who has a stake in our youth programs to visit the Web page to join and learn more, and to find the association on Facebook. Future generations of youth-program participants depend on us to keep the conversation going.

Memoranda

ONLINE CAREER CALENDAR

The American Legion has launched a comprehensive new online calendar of nationwide career events, along with information and registration links. Job fairs, career expos, business workshops and other activities are listed and promoted on a new and improved Veterans Career Center.

www.legion.org/careers

USAA AND THE AMERICAN LEGION

USAA is the preferred provider of insurance and financial services for The American Legion. By joining USAA, Legionnaires can help programs such as Boys Nation, the National Oratorical Contest, Heroes to Hometowns and American Legion Baseball.

usaa.com/legion
(877) 699-2654

CHILD WELFARE FOUNDATION

The American Legion celebrates Child Welfare Foundation Week during the first week of April.

American Legion
Child Welfare Foundation
P.O. Box 1055
Indianapolis, IN 46206

To donate to CWF:
www.legion.org/donate
www.legion.org/cwf

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STILL SERVING AMERICA

Does your post have a unique community program, an innovative recruiting method or a creative way of spreading the Legion message that could be implemented at posts across the country? Tell us how your post and its members are ***Still Serving America.***

In submitting your information, include your full name, address and telephone number. Send your items, labeled ***Still Serving America****, to the correspondence address at left.*

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ACTIVATION

Want to get involved in one of The American Legion's many national programs? Do you have a question about veterans affairs, national defense or what is going on in Washington? All you have to do is pick up the phone or send an e-mail.

Americanism/Children & Youth
(317) 630-1203
acy@legion.org

Economic
(202) 861-2700
econ@legion.org

Finance
317-630-1222
finance@legion.org

Internal Affairs
(317) 630-1330
ia@legion.org

Legislation
(202) 263-2981
leg@legion.org

National Security/Foreign Relations
(202) 861-2700
nsfr@legion.org

National Convention
(317) 630-1292
dholmes@legion.org
bwilliams@legion.org

National Emblem Sales
(888) 453-4466
emblem@legion.org
emblem.legion.org

Public Relations
(317) 630-1253
pr@legion.org

The American Legion Magazine
(317) 630-1298
magazine@legion.org

The American Legion Library
(317) 630-1366
library@legion.org

Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation
(202) 861-2700
var@legion.org

American Legion Baseball
(317) 630-1249
jquinlan@legion.org
legion.org/baseball

American Legion Child Welfare Foundation
(317) 630-1202
www.cwf-inc.org

American Legion Endowment Fund
(317) 630-1202

American Legion Riders
(317) 630-1327
legionriders@legion.org

Boys Nation
(317) 630-1207
acy@legion.org

Family Support Network
(317) 630-1395
(800) 504-4098
familysupport@legion.org

Junior Shooting Sports
(317) 630-1249
cshort@legion.org

Legion College
(317) 630-1265
mherndon@legion.org

National Emergency Fund
(317) 630-1321
ia@legion.org

National Oratorical Contest
(317) 630-1249
cshort@legion.org

Sons of The American Legion
SAL@legion.org

NATIONAL ADJUTANT'S MESSAGE

A legacy of giving

Legionnaire's generosity has provided more than $248,000 for the Legion's Endowment Fund.

By Daniel S. Wheeler

Shortly after the inception of The American Legion, our founding members had the foresight to realize there would be a need for financial assistance for disabled veterans, military families and the country's youth. They saw the struggles their fellow veterans were facing at the time and knew something had to be done about it.

More than 900,000 Legion family members, along with fellow Americans, combined to raise nearly $5 million to establish The American Legion Endowment Fund – a phenomenal amount of money at that time. The initial money provided decades of aid for those who answered the call of service and came home to difficulties. And the money kept coming. Nearly $30 million has been distributed since the fund was established.

Income from the fund's investments is used to fund the Legion's Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation programs, such as the important work of filing claims on behalf of veterans who were injured during their service. The money funds troop-support efforts such as the Legion's Temporary Financial Assistance program, which provides grants to military families or veterans with minor children in the home. In 2011 alone, 611 families – including 1,351 children – were provided with more than $635,000 in TFA grants.

Donations help maintain this fund. The money you contribute ensures that generations of veterans and their families will be cared for well into the future. That help is delivered because of the foresight of our founders – and because of the foresight decades later of Legionnaires like Edwin Malloy, Jr. A member of Post 23 in Cheraw, S.C., Malloy passed away in 2006. Before doing so, he established a trust that provides nearly $40,000 a year to the Endowment Fund. Almost $248,000 has been donated to the fund already.

An active Legionnaire, Malloy served in several department leadership positions, including department commander from 1976 to 1977, and on several national commissions and committees. His nephew, William M. Malloy Jr., said the Legion was one of Edwin's passions.

"He was very committed to the Boy Scouts and to The American Legion," William says. "Those were the two key entities out there that he really felt compelled to be a part of. He would always go to American Legion and Boy Scout conventions all over the country. He really felt a part of both of those organizations."

Edwin – an M.I.T. graduate and World War II Navy veteran who rose to the rank of commander – went to work for his family's investment firm, Malloy and Co. William is the fifth generation of Malloys to work there, and his son represents the sixth generation.

"My uncle was a brilliant man," William says. "He was a very savvy investor. He was very frugal, but he was also very generous. And he was a wonderful role model for me and my sisters. My father passed away in 2000, and my uncle sort of picked up where my father left off for us."

Edwin's is a 15-year trust, provided it can maintain the principle. If it does, it will mean more than $595,000 will be contributed to the Endowment Fund, thanks to Edwin's generosity and vision. Hundreds of military families who have found themselves in dire financial straits will continue to have someplace to turn for help because of Edwin. His donation helps make it possible for Legion staff to go before the Board of Veterans Appeals and argue on behalf of service-disabled veterans who have had their disability claims denied by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

"When you look around today, I don't think there's a time our veterans needed help more than they need it now," William says. "I think it's wonderful that my uncle had the insight to realize this and then made sure he was going to help long after he was gone. Our veterans are facing a lot of challenges, and it's nice to know that because of men like my uncle, the money is there to be able to provide to those veterans and their families the assistance they're going to need."

The American Legion has always looked toward the future, whether it was the founders establishing the Endowment Fund, Past National Commander Harry Colmery drafting what eventually became the GI Bill of Rights, or sponsoring an independent study on the effects of exposure to Agent Orange on Vietnam War veterans – a study that resulted in thousands of veterans getting benefits they may not have otherwise received. That foresight – and willingness to act on it – has created a legacy that will benefit generations of veterans and their families.

To donate to the Endowment Fund, or any other American Legion program or charity, go online or send checks or money orders to ***The American Legion, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, IN, 46206****.*

www.legion.org/donate

CONVENTION

Peterson to perform at national convention

Photo courtesy of Michael Peterson

Michael Peterson, the Grammy-nominated country music artist and spokesman for The American Legion Legacy Scholarship Fund, will perform at the National Commander's Banquet on Tuesday, Aug. 28, during the 94th National Convention in Indianapolis.

Peterson is known for country chart-toppers such as "Drink, Swear, Steal & Lie" and "From Here to Eternity," and has performed around the world for over a decade.

In addition to his work on behalf of the Legacy Scholarship Fund, Peterson is a featured speaker for the "TAG! You're It" high-school assembly program, sponsored by the Legion and the Army, and received the Legion's National Education Award in 2011.

The banquet will be held in Halls J & K of the Indiana Convention Center. Tickets are $45. Those interested in attending the banquet should contact their department adjutant.

www.legion.org/convention/resources

CONVENTION

Exhibit, sponsorship opportunities available

This year's American Legion National Convention Exhibit Hall will be located in Halls C & F at the Indiana Convention Center, Aug. 24-28. Anyone interested in securing exhibit space or arranging a convention sponsorship should contact Andrea Watson, convention coordinator, at **(317) 630-1318** or **awatson@legion.org**. You may also visit the Convention & Meetings Web page for more information.

Exhibit Hall hours will be 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Friday, Saturday and Monday, and 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sunday and Tuesday. Exhibit space will be assigned on a first-come, first-served basis.

www.legion.org/convention/resources

POST ACTIVITIES

National Post History Contest kicking off

Department conventions the first stop for judging; first-place finishers to go to national contest, judged during Fall Meetings at National Headquarters.

Post historians who have chronicled the last membership year in the life of their posts should start now on finalizing and submitting those chronicles for judging during upcoming department conventions, the first step in the National Post History Contest.

Entries in the categories of One-Year Post Narrative and One-Year Post Yearbook will be judged by the department historian during the conventions. Only the first-place finisher in each category, certified as such by the department historian, will be sent to National Headquarters for the National Post History Contest, where it will be judged by a committee of past and present department and national historians during Fall Meetings in October. Winners will receive plaques.

All national entries must be certified and submitted to National Headquarters by Sept. 15.

Convention dates vary by department. For this and other information regarding the contest, contact your department historian. A directory of departments can be found at **www.legion.org/departments**. For department historians, the National Department History Contest, for the best yearly department One-Year Department Narrative and One-Year Narrative Yearbook entries, will also take place at National Headquarters during Fall Meetings; these entries are also due by Sept. 15.

If you did not put together an entry for the past year, consider starting now on the one that will begin in June. These chronicles can serve as templates for future post members to continue the activities and community service that make your post special.

Use your Consolidated Post Report for a list of possible events to cover; a link to the CPR is available online at **www.legion.org/sites/legion.org/files/legion/publications/cpr_0.pdf**. Handy guidelines and advice on creating narratives and yearbooks can be found in the Post Officer's Guide at **www.legion.org/sites/legion.org/files/legion/publications/officers_guide.pdf**, beginning on page 160.

WONG from Page 1

importance of ensuring that we do not increase the burden on veterans who have earned the right to TRICARE. Additionally, no increase in TRICARE should occur when there is not also an increase in the cost-of-living adjustment."

Wong pointed out that the Legion's opposition to TRICARE co-pay increases was clearly stated during the 2011 Spring NEC Meetings, when the National Executive Committee adopted Resolution 24. The resolution reads, in part, "That The American Legion shall prevail upon this administration and the Department of Defense (DoD) to reconsider any proposals to implement any increases in military retirees' TRICARE enrollment fees, deductibles, or premiums and … The American Legion resists increases in TRICARE premiums to retirees and adamantly opposes any proposal that will significantly and negatively impact quality-of-life benefits for honorable military service."

The text of Resolution 24 is available online under "May 2011 NEC Resolutions."

www.legion.org/resolutions

WASHINGTON CONFERENCE

‘Here I am ... standing’

Double amputee tells Legion family members that military medical care is well worth the price.

By Steve B. Brooks

Citing his own case as the perfect example, Army Capt. Dan Berschinski told attendees at The American Legion’s Washington Conference Commander’s Call that the cost of military health care is well worth any price tag.

Speaking to a full house of Legion family members on Feb. 28, Berschinski told his story: how he stepped on an improvised explosive device in Afghanistan in August of 2009 while leading his platoon on patrol, costing him both legs. Yet through state-of-the-art prosthetics and rehabilitation at Walter Reed Army Medical Center Berschinski not only is walking again – the first service-member to do so after having both legs amputated above his knees – but also has started his own plastic manufacturing and distribution company.

“I consider myself to be pretty lucky,” said Berschinski, a West Point graduate who will retire from the Army in April. “I have one thigh left, and on my right side, I actually have no femur left at all. Yet here I am, walking in front of you and standing at the podium to speak. That is a testament to our health care. The health care in the military medical system, and at Walter Reed specifically, is phenomenal. It is, bar none, the best in the world. The legs I am standing on at this very moment are available only to DoD amputees. These legs are designed to allow one-legged soldiers to return to combat if they so desire.

“The nurses were amazing, the doctors were amazing, the therapists are amazing. But really, one of the key contributors to my success has been the atmosphere that I have rehabbed in... with many other wounded veterans. It makes all the difference in the world because we have a support network.”

Berschinski said funding DoD medical care is an investment in the future. “If anyone doesn’t understand why you should take the time and spend the money to give me surgery, to give me rehab, to give me legs, I will tell you it will all get paid back down the road when I have this successful business and am hiring more Americans,” he said. “That goes for everybody. As soon as you can get us back to work, it benefits the entire nation.”

Also during the Commander’s Call:

• W. Scott Gould, deputy secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs, updated Legion family members about VA’s budget and the claims backlog. Gould said the fiscal 2013 VA budget, along with the 2014 advanced appropriations, will, “uphold our joint commitment to care for those citizen-soldiers who have borne the battle, and for their families.” The 2013 budget request is $140.3 billion – an increase of 10.5 percent from the 2012 budget. The department’s combined mandatory and discretionary budgets have increased by 50 percent since 2009.

“There are unprecedented increases in our budget,” Gould said. “And they are matched by unprecedented improvements in our financial management at VA to make sure we spend that money wisely.”

Gould said that while VA still has to work through its claims backlog, a new automated system will process every VA claim within 125 days at a 98-percent accuracy rate.

Gould thanked the Legion for its role in providing a place for veterans to share their experiences. “Organizations such as The American Legion go a long way toward... providing a safe place for veterans,” he said. “The American Legion provides safe places across the country for veterans. You leave no veteran behind in your around-the-clock work to make sure that veterans health care, benefits and memorial services are fully funded and staffed by VA employees and supported by Legion volunteers who have only one mission: caring for our veterans.”

• U.S. Rep. Tim Walz, DFL-Minn., received a strong reception when he criticized the partisanship often involved in congressional action – all while men and women are dying while serving their country. He read the names of four U.S. servicemembers killed in action in recent days.

“Think of the sacrifices these people made to allow us the privilege and honor of self-governing ourselves,” Walz said. “We better start reflecting what we do (in Washington) to reflect the type of sacrifice, service and commitment to country that these four made.”

While addressing budget cuts to the Department of Defense, Walz said that during a trip to Afghanistan, U.S. servicemembers he spoke to expressed concerns over their families’ health care and pensions. “We can make tough decisions, but don’t you dare put those on the front lines first on the chopping block,” he said.

Army Capt. Dan Berschinski, a double amputee, talks about the value of military medical care during the Commander’s Call. *American Legion photo*

Walz – a retired National Guard command sergeant major and the highest-ranking enlisted soldier to ever serve in Congress – thanked the Legion for its lobbying efforts. “Every time The American Legion’s in town or every time your folks are on the Hill, I rest a little easier because I know they’re getting it right and for all the right reasons,” he said. “There are many places you can be. There are places you can take your talent, your resources. There’s one very simple reason why you’re doing this: you love this country with all your heart, and you recognize that if you’re not here doing it, no one else will.”

• U.S. Rep. Jason Altmire, D-Pa., was recognized for being one of four members of Congress who introduced legislation that, after passing, amended the Legion’s congressional charter. The House measure picked up 432 co-sponsors – the most for any piece of legislation ever – and passed in six days. Altmire said both the House and Senate measures got more support than any bill in history.

“When your leadership here at The American Legion came to me during the summer of last year and said, ‘Can you pass this modernization?’ it came at a time when we weren’t getting along on anything,” Altmire said. “There was nothing that the Congress could agree on. There was no bill that could come up that there wasn’t an argument or heated debate.

“When I started to take this bill around to solicit co-sponsors and make sure we could bring it to floor, what I found is that there was at least one thing we could all agree on, and that’s you: the men and women who have served this nation so honorably.”

WASHINGTON CONFERENCE

'A true friend of veterans'

Rep. Bob Filner honored with Legion's Distinguished Public Service Award during Washington Conference.

By Steve B. Brooks

Called a “true friend of veterans,” U.S. Rep. Bob Filner, D-Calif., was awarded The American Legion’s Distinguished Public Service Award on Feb. 28, during the 52nd annual Washington Conference.

Filner served as chairman of the House Committee on Veterans Affairs in the 110th and 111th Congresses. He is running for mayor of San Diego and will leave the House at the end of this year.

“During his tenure as committee chairman, Rep. Filner presided over significant legislation to provide historic budget increases for veterans, secured advanced appropriations for (the Department of Veterans Affairs), expanded access to VA health care and improved health services for all veterans,” National Commander Fang A. Wong said. “He’s a true friend of veterans.”

Saying he was humbled to accept the award, Filner discussed his time protesting the Vietnam War as a young man. “When you all came back, I didn’t spit on you,” he said. “But we did not recognize your heroism. We did not recognize the sacrifice. We did not recognize, as a nation, the price that you all paid. I have learned about that, and it has affected everything I do every day in Congress.”

Filner said one step toward righting that wrong, as well as toward reducing VA’s massive backlog of disability claims, is by accepting all claims involving exposure to Agent Orange – not just soldiers who served on the ground in Vietnam.

“That would say ‘thank you,’” Filner said. “That would say ‘welcome home.’ (Those claims) have been in the pipeline for how long? Thirty years? Forty years? It’s time to say ‘thank you’ by honoring all of those Agent Orange claims. Just grant them.

“They say, ‘Well, it may cost too much.’ How we can afford not to? Let’s say it cost $1 billion, maybe $2 billion. You know what our debt is? $14 trillion.

Rep. Bob Filner received the Distinguished Public Service Award. *American Legion photo*

Are you going to tell me you’re going to balance the budget on the backs of our Vietnam vets by not granting these claims?”

Filner said the same mistakes cannot be made with the current generation of U.S. servicemembers returning home from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. “The best thing we can do … is give them a job,” he said.

WASHINGTON CONFERENCE

War-movie groundbreaker honored by Legion

Dale Dye receives The National Commander's Public Relations Award for having brought the realities of combat to the big screen.

Dale Dye came back from the Vietnam War with three Purple Hearts, a Bronze Star and the experience of having survived no fewer than 31 major combat operations. That was 1970. Forty-two years later, the retired U.S. Marine Corps captain and top military adviser for such blockbuster movies as "Saving Private Ryan," "Platoon" and "The Pacific" has received the prestigious National Commander's Public Relations Award for his efforts to bring realism to Hollywood war films.

"I'll just presume that this great award … means that in some way I have made a little bit of accomplishment in my mission, which is to burnish, to polish and to expose to the public the true nature of America's military people, and of our veterans," Dye told about 1,000 gathered in Washington Feb. 29 for the annual ceremony that closed The American Legion's 52nd Washington Conference.

Dye, who worked on the editorial staff of *Soldier of Fortune* magazine following his 1984 retirement from the Marine Corps, took his wealth of battlefield experience to Hollywood in the mid-1980s and launched a boot camp called Warriors, Inc., to provide actors an understanding of the real warrior spirit.

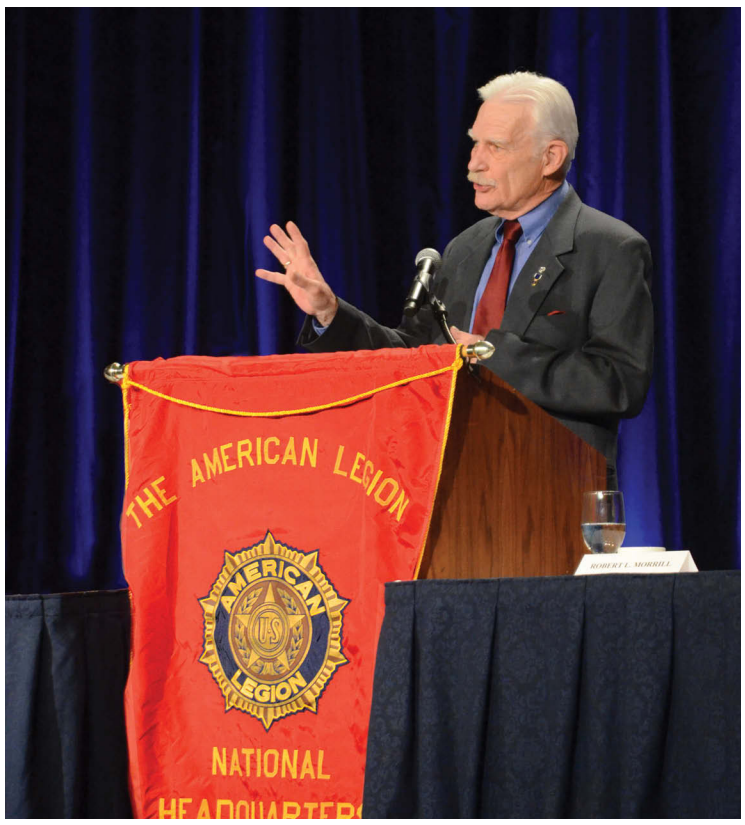
American Legion National Commander Fang A. Wong told the crowd that Dye's work "has provided a needed perspective in the art and entertainment industry."

In a short film clip that was presented as part of the ceremony, "Saving Private Ryan" star Tom Hanks credited Dye for capturing the essence of what it's like to play the part of a combat soldier at war. "You have to understand we are essentially playing guys who are tired and miserable and want to go home, of whom great physical things are being demanded constantly," Hanks said in the clip. "We couldn't have done that without having gone through something like what Dale Dye put us through."

"I'm truly humbled when people tell me that I may have changed the way Hollywood makes military movies," Dye said, a member of American Legion Post 40 in North Carolina. "If I ever had an epitaph, it would be that … I believe that America, our America, deserves a little fact with its fiction when it comes to motion pictures and television. If ever there has been a time with young Americans, this is it, to use popular media to tell them, to teach them, where we came from, what our ideals are, and what we believe in."

Dye joins such national figures as Tom Brokaw, Lee Greenwood, Red Skelton, Paul "Bear" Bryant, Karl Malden and Lou Dobbs on a list of National Commander's Public Relations Award recipients, dating back to 1961. To see a video of Dye's acceptance speech, go to **legion.org**.

www.legion.org/prawards
www.warriorsinc.com



Above right: National Commander Fang Wong and his wife, Barbara, stand with Public Relations Award recipient Dale Dye in Washington. **Right:** Dye thanks Legionnaires for his award. *American Legion photo*

INTEGRITY from Page 1

with a B.S. in agricultural extension. He went on to teach school for several years before becoming the owner-operator of a 320-acre cattle and pork farm in Nebraska.

He joined Post 159 in 1950 and was voted post commander three years later. During his tenure, he led a program that established a $26,000 Legion-owned medical clinic; the town had been without a doctor for 12 years.

Nine years later, Galbraith was elected department commander, during which he offered the department's full support to the state's education efforts. Nebraska's governor named Galbraith co-chairman of a three-year series of state regional conferences on education. Galbraith also served on the state's 15-man Centennial Celebration Commission – an experience that later served Galbraith when he was helping plan the Legion's 50th anniversary in 1969. For his work in planning Nebraska's centennial, Galbraith was named honorary parade chairman for the event.

"I was very impressed with his background," said Department of New York Adjutant Dick Pedro, who first met Galbraith when the future national commander was campaigning through New York. "He had quite a professional background. And he came up very fast within the ranks of The American Legion."

After serving on the NEC and as a national vice commander, Galbraith was elected national commander on Aug. 31, 1967, at age 41. He was the first national commander from Nebraska.

During his tenure leading the Legion, Galbraith had a chance to visit South Vietnam. Upon his return, he wrote how those wanting to abandon the war efforts there hadn't had a chance to visit the country. "On all sides I was surprised to see a nation with an enormous future," he wrote in *The American Legion Magazine*. "(It's) a rich land, ripe for development, inhabited by a people with the native talent to develop it." He emphasized that when talking about U.S. involvement in Vietnam, the future needed to be considered – not just the present.

As 1968 was an election year, Galbraith also warned against using Vietnam for political gains – especially when it came to discussing negotiations to end the war. "The negotiations are no game for amateurs," he wrote, "nor should any true American having no responsibility in them, invite himself in the swim to muddy the waters."

Galbraith launched the Stitch-In-Time program, with the goal of sending 100 sewing machines – along with textiles – to South Vietnam to provide occupational training and employment for war widows, orphans and other war refugees.

Looking toward the future, Galbraith created The American Legion Task Force for the Future. The mission of the task force, Galbraith said, was to examine the posture of the United States in areas of education, health and welfare, the condition of the economy and the conservation of natural resources. At the same time, the task force was to examine the programs and goals of the Legion to determine their conformance with current patterns of American life, and to come up with new ways the Legion could make significant contributions to the nation. The end result of the task force was to provide the Legion with a strategy for the future.

Galbraith appeared before the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs in March of 1968, calling for increases in compensation payments for 100-percent service-connected disabled veterans and for the monthly dependency indemnity compensation for widows, and for the then-Veterans Administration to take over leadership and maintenance of all national cemeteries.

Membership in the organization climbed by more than 36,000 during Galbraith's tenure, which also included the launching of S.S. *American Legion*, a $17 million container liner. Galbraith's wife christened the ship under her husband's eye on Feb. 27, 1968.

And as one of his final acts as national commander, Galbraith presented Secretary of the Army Stanley Resor with $50,000 on Aug. 16, 1968. The money was a down payment on The American Legion's Gift to the Nation – a permanent lighting system for the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington National Cemetery. A trust also was set up to cover the cost of perpetual maintenance to the system.

In addition to his Legion work, Galbraith was a member of other veterans service and civic organizations, and was given several appointments through the U.S. Department of Agriculture, including deputy administrator for state and county operations for Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Services.

"He really worked long and hard for The American Legion and for the farmers back in his home state," Bacon said. "If you're looking for an individual who was dedicated for his entire life to veterans, that man was Bill Galbraith."

Galbraith is survived by his wife, daughter Claudia, and son Billy. Condolences should be sent to Billy Galbraith and family, 4905 Long Branch Lane, Edmond, OK 73034.

DATELINE: CAPITOL HILL

Fiscal 2013 VA budget announced

On Feb. 13, President Obama released his fiscal 2013 federal budget proposal. The budget contains increased funding for the Department of Veterans Affairs. The proposed VA funding for the next fiscal year, which begins Oct. 1, totals $139.7 billion for all VA programs – an increase of $10.5 billion from current-year funding.

The charts below compare VA discretionary spending from fiscal 2012 final funding, the president's fiscal 2013 proposal, and The American Legion's recommendations as presented by National Commander Fang Wong to the House and Senate Committees on Veterans' Affairs last September. The first chart outlines VA medical programs – mainly advance appropriations – while the second chart shows nonmedical areas.

Some proposed funding for specific areas include:

- $1 billion to provide VA services for homeless and at-risk veterans through collaborative partnerships with local governments, nonprofit organizations, and the departments of Housing and Urban Development, Justice and Labor;
- $250 million to improve access and quality of care for VA-enrolled veterans residing in rural areas, by supporting their unique needs;
- $128 million for the Veterans Benefits Management System, designed to reduce processing time and the claims backlog, and facilitate quality improvements through rules-based tools and automatic claims tracking; and
- $32.7 million to fund 279 additional vocational rehabilitation and employment counselors, to ensure that veterans receive timely information about education opportunities, job counseling and placement.

Over the next few months, the House and Senate will hold hearings about the funding proposals in the president's budget. Eventually, spending bills will be promulgated by the two appropriations committees. Hopefully, these spending measures will be voted on and signed into law by the president prior to the beginning of fiscal 2013. The Legion will continue to follow these events closely.

Kenneth F. Governor
Chairman, National Legislative Commission

Committee hearings examine proposed VA budget

On Feb. 15, the full House Committee on Veterans' Affairs met to receive the president's proposed fiscal 2013 budget for the Department of Veterans Affairs. One panel consisted of American Legion Legislative Division Director Tim Tetz, along with representatives of multiple veterans groups that produce the Independent Budget.

Committee Chairman Jeff Miller, R-Fla., initiated the hearing by voicing his deep and continued concern that VA's budget is not protected from the threat of sequestration – mandatory across-the-board budget cuts triggered under the Budget Control Act by the failure of the congressional "supercommittee" to reach agreement on deficit reduction last fall.

Despite repeated requests for clarification from the committee to both VA and the Office of Management and Budget, there remains a question as to whether VA will be subject to a mandatory 2-percent budget cut under the rules of sequestration. VA Secretary Eric Shinseki was unable to provide a clear answer on this topic.

Further comment from the committee commended VA for a 12-percent increased overall budget, yet raised questions as to whether enough funds were available to achieve necessary improvements in operations for VA health care, as well as to the service-connected-disability benefits system. One issue was a proposed billion-dollar plan to establish a Veterans Job Corps to provide 20,000 new jobs for veterans working outdoors to improve the nation's parks and public lands. VA officials could not provide details of the plan, only hinting that these details were "coming" and that the program would be more fully explained at a later date.

Tetz spoke at the conclusion of the final panel, applauding VA's presentation but questioning whether it was truly a beneficial budget to veterans or, in reality, a "house of cards" of empty budgetary gimmicks that brought few real increases to the VA budgets. Criticizing shortfalls in funding of VA's construction budgets, Tetz noted, "if VA follows the recommendations of their own Strategic Capital Investment Plan for the next 10 years, but only funds the construction at the proposed levels, it will take 50 years to complete their 10-year plan."

Breaking down several of the problems inherent in the proposed budget, Tetz said, "If you take the proposed 12-percent increase in budget, subtract nearly $10 billion in mandatory funds which went up only as a result of the cost-of-living increases for veteran disabilities – gains bought only with the blood and tears of veterans – then take out the $1 billion for the job corps which requires Congress to pass new laws to enact, and take out the proposed increase in the medical collection accounts that have not even been authorized at the proposed levels, you're left with a budget increase just under 2 percent. That 2 percent will disappear if VA is not exempt from sequestration."

A subsequent, follow-up hearing by the Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs (DAMA), held on Feb. 16, delved into more detail on the budgets of the Veterans Benefits Administration and the National Cemetery Administration (NCA), as well as veterans courts. This later hearing largely focused on concerns arising from a national audit being conducted by NCA to ensure that tombstone realignment conducted by contractors at more than 90 national cemeteries was performed to standards. Problems arising at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery in Texas triggered a much larger nationwide investigation. NCA Director Steve Muro assured Congress that their investigation of the nation's cemeteries was extensive, and that measures were in place to ensure that none of the outside contracting would have provided anything less than the 98-percent satisfaction rating NCA is known for.

It should be noted that the fiscal 2013 budget process is just beginning. The proposed VA funding totals contained in the president's budget are just that – proposed. The House and Senate appropriations committees will hopefully produce spending bills by early summer. With congressional and presidential elections this fall, it is hoped that both chambers of Congress will finish up the appropriations process quickly. However, recent history contradicts that hope.

Subcommittee examines consolidating military medical services

On Feb. 8, American Legion Legislative Deputy Director Dean Stoline attended an oversight hearing held by the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense about "Military Health Systems Governance." The purpose was to hear the opinions of the Army, Navy and Air Force surgeons general regarding the current state of medical service operations, and how they are progressing to the consolidation of those operations under the Unified Medical Command concept. In addition, the committee wanted to hear their opinions regarding the effectiveness of the joint task force that consolidated the Walter Reed, Fort Belvoir and Bethesda Naval hospitals, and whether that could serve as a model for the Unified Medical Command efforts.

The testimony revealed several problems to the committee. First, the Pentagon has not devised a plan to unite the medical operations of the services. No joint doctrine to study how the various service branches provide medical care has been developed (although some consolidation of some functions have occurred due to the BRAC law). No studies for cost-savings of combining medical operations have been conducted, and there is no common financial accounting system for medical spending.

The witnesses stated that there are some joint medical operations at the joint-base level, but these services are still provided command-and-control by one service; for example, the Army operates the medical facilities at the Fort Bragg/Pope (Air Force Base) Field joint command. The witnesses

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VA MEDICAL DISCRETIONARY PROGRAMS

	Final FY 2013 Advance Appropriations (P.L. 112-74)	President's FY 2014 VA Advance Appropriations	American Legion's FY 2014 Request
Medical Services	$41.3 billion	$41.5 billion	$44 billion
Medical Support & Compliance	$5.3 billion	$5.7 billion	$5.5 billion
Medical Facilities	$5.7 billion	$5.4 billion	$6 billion
Medical/Prosthetic Research *	$581 million	$583 million	$600 million
Total Medical Care	$52.9 billion	$53.2 billion	$56.1 billion

* This account is *not* included in the advance appropriations calculations.

VA NONMEDICAL DISCRETIONARY PROGRAMS

	Final FY 2012 Appropriations (P.L. 112-74)	President's FY 2013 Budget Proposal	American Legion's FY 2013 Budget Request
Natl. Cemetery Administration (NCA)	$251 million	$258 million	$260 million
General Operating Expenses – VBA	$2 billion	$2.2 billion	$2.2 billion
Information Technology	$3.1 billion	$3.3 billion	$3.3 billion
Major Construction	$590 million	$532 million	$5.3 billion
Major Construction – NCA	$38 million	$10 million	$100 million
Minor Construction	$482 million	$608 million	$1.2 billion
Minor Construction – NCA	$42 million	$58 million	$100 million
State Veterans Homes Grants	$85 million	$85 million	$85 million
State Veterans Cemetery Grants	$46 million	$46 million	$50 million

MEMBERSHIP INCENTIVE

Post visits to be rewarded

The District Commander Post Visitation Award is an incentive for personal visits to posts by district commanders and vice commanders. The desired result is a personal visit to each post in a given district by either the district commander or, in bigger districts, one of the district vice commanders. Personal contact at this level sets the example for post membership workers to make the personal contacts necessary for a successful membership program.

CRITERIA. To qualify for the award, the district commander and/or vice commanders must visit each post in the district during their year. For districts with more than 30 posts, the district vice commanders can assist in making visits, but the district commander must visit at least 30 of the posts personally.

CERTIFICATION. A list of posts in each district can be obtained with the assistance of department headquarters. The list will be mailed in spreadsheet format to each district commander. At the completion of the 100-percent visit requirement, the district commander will send the completed spreadsheet to the department, which will forward it to National Headquarters by Aug. 1, 2012.

AWARDS. Each district commander who achieves the 100-percent visit requirement will receive a certificate recognizing the achievement. There are five categories of recognition, and five additional prizes awarded based on a drawing of the eligible district commanders in each category. The categories are: districts with up to 20 posts, districts with 21 to 35 posts, districts with 36 to 50 posts, districts with 51 to 65 posts, and districts with 65 or more posts. The commander drawn from the group of 100-percent commanders in each category will receive a gift certificate from Emblem Sales. The amount of the certificate recognizes the increased difficulty in achieving the award in larger districts.

- Category 1 (up to 20 posts) – $100
- Category 2 (21 to 35 posts) – $200
- Category 3 (36 to 50 posts) – $300
- Category 4 (51 to 65 posts) – $400
- Category 5 (65 or more posts) – $500

www.legion.org/commander/districtpost

MEMBERSHIP INCENTIVE

Post Excellence Award continues

National Commander Fang Wong has continued the Post Excellence Award program, which honors posts that show excellence in membership participation, youth activities, community service, and support to veterans and U.S. troops.

The award promotes membership growth, demonstrates Legion values to youth, and increases the Legion family's visibility through community-service projects. Many posts may already qualify for a Post Excellence Award because of their programs and activities.

CRITERIA. Standards to be achieved in each area include:

Membership – Post membership must be at least one member greater than the previous year. Post officer must attend district meetings.

Youth Activities – The post must sponsor and actively participate in at least one primary youth program: Boys State, Legion Baseball, the Oratorical Contest, Boy Scouts of America or Junior Shooting Sports.

Community Service – The post must organize a community-service project that involves Legion-family members. Potential projects abound; for example, a post could focus on a Children & Youth service, or fulfill a strictly local need. A monetary donation may only be one part of a project.

Service to Troops or Veterans – The post must organize a project supporting troops or veterans, involving Legion-family members outside the post. Projects could include Legion programs such as the Family Support Network or Heroes to Hometowns. Or they could simply help a local veteran with needed improvements to a home. A monetary donation may only be one part of a project.

www.legion.org/commander/postexcellence

CERTIFICATION. District commanders must certify posts as having fulfilled the four specified criteria. District commanders will submit a list of posts meeting the criteria to department headquarters. The list should include post name, post number, address and commander's name. Ideally, the last two criteria will be accompanied with copies of press releases, submitted to local media, that raise awareness for the projects. This ensures that the projects were not only accomplished but that an attempt was made to enhance the Legion's public image. The copies submitted should include a date-time stamp, showing receipt by the media outlet. The department adjutant will transmit information as posts qualify.

Each qualifying post receives a certificate of recognition, mailed to the department and awarded to the post. District commanders whose districts have at least 50 percent of posts reach certification will receive framed certificates recognizing their achievements. District commanders whose districts achieve the highest percentage of recognized posts will receive additional awards. In the event of a tie within a department, all district commanders with the same percentage will receive recognition.

BUDGET from Page 6

continued that all three services have different accounting systems, and that one will have to be developed under a unified command that provides both transparency and efficiency.

When asked by committee members what, if any, medical consolidation efforts had been made, the witnesses said that the Air Force's and Navy's enlisted-medical-occupations-personnel training had been consolidated at the Army training facility at Fort Sam Houston, and the Air Force and Navy training bases had been closed.

The committee members expressed their disappointment at the slowness of the medical consolidation plan and indicated that the Pentagon would have to work harder on this consolidation, as the upcoming budget debate would not let the services continue to operate three duplicative medical systems. The members continued that the service branches need to strive for a military medical command that provides one joint standard for medical care of all military personnel, and that individual services could not continue to operate their facilities under their service rules even when the facilities are staffed by medical personnel from other branches of service.

TAPS

Henry L. Adams

Douglasville, Ga.

Henry L. Adams of Post 147 (Department of Georgia) passed away Feb. 17 at age 47. He was a Persian Gulf War Army veteran.

Mr. Adams served as department commander from 2009 to 2010 and National Distinguished Guests Committee vice chairman from 2005 to 2010.

He was a member of the National Legislative Council from 2007 to 2012 and the National *American Legion Magazine* Commission from 2010 to 2012.

William E. Galbraith

Chandler, Ariz.

William E. Galbraith of Post 159 (Department of Nebraska) passed away March 4 at age 86. He was a World War II Navy veteran.

Mr. Galbraith served as national commander from 1967 to 1968. He also served as department commander from 1962 to 1963, National Executive Committeeman from 1964 to 1965, national vice commander from 1965 to 1966, National Child Welfare Foundation director from 1965 to 1966, National Child Welfare Foundation treasurer from 1966 to 1967, National Overseas Graves Decoration Trust vice chairman from 1968 to 1969, National Overseas Graves Decoration Trust chairman from 1967 to 1968, National Advisory Committee to the National Commander chairman from 1968 to 1969, National Advisory Committee to the National Commander vice chairman from 1969 to 1970 and National Task Force for the Future chairman from 1968 to 1969.

He was a member of the National Advisory Committee to the National Commander from 1966 to 1967, the National Overseas Graves Decoration Trust from 1969 to 1970, the National 50th Anniversary Committee Executive Section from 1966 to 1967 and 1968 to 1969, and the National Commander's Special Committee on Education from 1975 to 1976. He also was an ex-officio member of the National Finance Commission from 1967 to 1968.

Richard M. Hochbrueckner

Hicksville, N.Y.

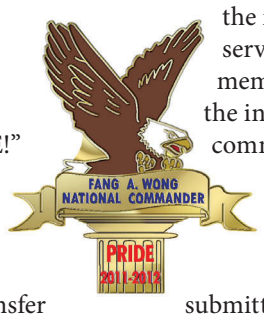
Richard M. Hochbrueckner of Post 421 (Department of New York) passed away Feb. 8 at age 84. He was a World War II Army veteran.

Mr. Hochbrueckner served as National Americanism Council vice chairman from 1990 to 2012 and National Distinguished Guests Committee vice chairman from 1988 to 1990.

He was a member of the National Legislative Council from 1993 to 1994.

MEMBERSHIP INCENTIVE

Recruiters to be honored with 'I Serve with PRIDE' pin



During the 2011-2012 membership year, National Commander Fang Wong is awarding his National Commander "I Serve with PRIDE!" pin to any Legion-family member who signs up eight members. These can be any combination of new members, members who transfer from their department headquarters post, or current members who renew.

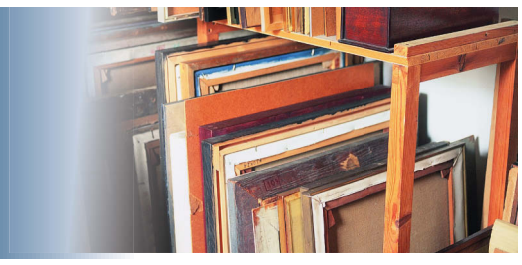
A new member is defined as any eligible person joining for the 2012 membership year who was not a member of the Legion during the 2011 membership year.

The national commander's goal is to recognize those in the Legion family who actively recruit new members into the nation's largest veterans service organization for the 2012 membership year. To maintain the integrity of the national commander's pin-incentive program, only one will be awarded per individual.

The certification form for this program may be submitted now. Upon receipt, national Membership staff will confirm the names and mail the pin directly to the person who earned it. The "I Serve with PRIDE!" pin-incentive program will end on June 30, 2012.

www.legion.org/commander/supereightincentive

Attentive Rep Uncovers Masterpieces Worth Thousands



USAA's Casey Marmol asked a 25-year member with only an auto insurance policy how USAA could do more for her. The 66-year-old Colorado widow replied: "Tell me what you can do for an old lady who lives on $2,000 a month and has lost everything."

After her husband died, she'd lost their family business and retirement savings, and was now relying on a fixed Social Security check of $2,000 a month to make ends meet. A short sale on her home had even left her homeless for a while.

Widow challenges rep to help

Her challenge wasn't lost on Casey. He inquired about all her financial needs and:

- reviewed her auto insurance coverage and saved her $22 a month.
- helped her apply for a low variable-rate USAA Bank credit card to replace her high-interest one with another bank.
- suggested that she apply for a Medicare Supplement policy that was more competitive than her current policy.
- suggested that she reduce or eliminate umbrella coverage that provided liability protection for a business she no longer owned.
- guided her through Auto Circle™ and connected her with a local dealer to trade in her big, gas-guzzling Volvo SUV for a smaller, more economical car.

Inquiry reveals art collection worth thousands

Casey then asked the widow, "What do you have set up for savings in case of an emergency?" She replied, "Nothing. I did sell a painting worth $80,000 below value, for $50,000, to bail myself out and purchase my home." Recognizing this as a large sum of money for a painting, Casey asked her more questions. Apparently, she and her husband had collected 11 more paintings, including two David Mazures and four Salvador Dalis, oriental rugs, gold coins and stamps.

Upon hearing this, Casey recommended that she:

- appraise each item and add a Valuable Personal Property rider through USAA to her current homeowners policy to make sure her collectibles were adequately insured.
- consider selling some pieces to ease her financial burden and start a savings or retirement fund.

She liked all of his suggestions but was concerned about one. She told Casey that she had put off having the paintings appraised for more than 10 years out of fear that she'd be taken advantage of by the appraisers. Easing her concern, Casey contacted the Better Business Bureau and found an A-rated appraiser in the area who happened to be a USAA member and was wowed that USAA would go to such lengths to help a member. Casey arranged a conference call with the appraiser and member to set up an appointment for a home visit.

Longevity and loyalty create member trust

"She was fearful and didn't trust others, but trusted us," said Casey. "We took care of her and her husband for years while her husband was alive, so she wanted to stay with us, but her husband had taken care of everything and she needed someone to guide her on what to do."

When the call was over, she was very appreciative, Casey said, telling him, "You couldn't have called at a better time. I knew what I had to do but was afraid." Casey will follow up with the member after the appraisal to see how he can assist her in setting up a savings or retirement plan, and check on the progress of her new coverages.

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